

Workers! This Is Not Our War!
It Is a War for Boss Profits!
Join Hands in Independent
Labor Action Against the War!

LABOR ACTION

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DECEMBER 9, 1940

ORGAN OF THE WORKERS PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

THREE CENTS

WAR MONGERS AIM BLOW AT UNIONS

Southern Textile On the March

"Neglect" Labor Boards for More Effective Methods

By MIKE STEVENS

Intolerable speed-ups, firing of union militants, increased work-loads, have led to spontaneous strikes lasting from three days to four weeks among the textile workers of South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee and other nearby states. In many instances these strikes are organized in defiance of the union leaders.

At Columbia, South Carolina, the Olympia Plant of the Pacific Mills is closed down for the third time in two months. Several weeks ago heavier work-loads were forced on the workers in all four plants of the Pacific Mills. The union (TWUA) leadership suggested that the workers give the "new plan" a trial. The workers answered by shutting down all four plants for a month.

After a month's strike the workers returned upon the company's promise to make many changes in the work-loads.

On Oct. 28, the Olympia Plant was once again shut down by strike. According to the spinning-hands, the new work-load is "physically and humanly impossible" and the workers demanded a reduction from 12 sides to 10. The spinners say that in the course of a day's work they do not have time enough to eat a sandwich for lunch, or take a drink of water.

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Mass Arrests of Nationalists Sweeping India

Emphasizing their determination to maintain their hold upon India, the British authorities have launched a nation-wide campaign of mass arrests in response to the limited opposition campaign organized by Gandhi, leader of the Indian National Congress.

Hundreds of arrests have been publicly acknowledged—meaning that thousands have been arrested secretly. These mass arrests include not only radical nationalists, but even the most conservative and orthodox followers of Gandhi. A substantial majority of the Congress Working Committee—leading Congress executive body—is now behind bars. Former Congress Provincial ministers, Assembly spokesmen, etc., have been taken in the repressive dragnet of the British imperialists. The authorities are clearly aiming at a clean sweep of the entire nationalist leadership, in addition to all possible future leaders of any opposition movement.

These reactionary measures—in themselves an indication of India's steadfast unwillingness to support the war—will only increase the determination of the people to refuse all cooperation and aid to their British rulers.

Last Dollar Gone, Hangs Himself

In New York City, the home of Wall Street, a man, jobless and hungry, walked to Central Park, and there hanged himself. In his pocket the following letter was found. We print it without comment—for no comment is needed:

"My Friends: I am writing this note not to encourage pity. I don't need any. I think a man who kills himself owes an explanation to the good people who find visible remains of his former self.

"I was successful once. I lost my job. I have been unemployed for the last three and one-half years—lost all my money. It was impossible to find any suitable work. A \$15 a week job could have saved me.

"I failed to get one last Monday when I made my last final effort. Relief and charity is impossible and I prefer death. Today my funds and last dollar got away.

"Thinking it over, I said to myself: 'It is time to go. I am no value to the world. Death is a blessing for the hopeless ones, even at the end of a rope on a cold winter's night.' I feel certain God will forgive me and I beg you to do likewise. Peace, equality and eternity will be the next step."

Vultee Strike: A Lesson on the Home Front



Vultee Men at Work With Union Spirits High CIO Lays Plans for Organization of Other Aircraft Plants

Special to Labor Action

LOS ANGELES, Calif.—An enthusiastic body of CIO union men marched into work at the Vultee Aircraft plant, after winning a twelve day strike for higher wages and other union demands.

Reports of special forces of FBI men to check on each employe emanated from company officials in the hope that some of the spirit of the men might be slightly dampened as they returned to work.

But the Vultee workers were too happy to worry about minor reports and rumors of that kind. Especially the lower bracket men. Over 1,400 of them went from 50 to 52 cents an hour to a 62½ cent minimum. While it isn't all that the union demanded, it was a very substantial increase, and the men know it.

Night shift workers who toil for 6½ hours get paid for 8 hours and also receive a five cent an hour bonus. Vacations with pay, sick leave, recognition of union shop committees to settle grievances were among the other gains.

The arbitration clause was a slight

retreat from the federal government's demand of a no strike clause. It was a big retreat for the union which did not want binding arbitration. But this clause is not as binding as it seems on first glance.

As these gains were explained at the union mass meeting to ratify the agreement, cheers rolled through the packed auditorium over and over again.

Ridicule Dies

Wyndham Mortimer, autoworker organizer, was cheered when he ridiculed the Dies Committee for a couple of minutes during his report on the contract. It was evident that the huge red scare hadn't frightened the workers the least bit, although many of them knew what Mortimer's political tinge happens to be.

The arbitration clause provides for the selection of two representatives each by the union and the company, and a joint selection of a fifth man. This shall be the arbitration board. If the company and the union are unable to agree on the fifth man, they will call on the federal conciliator to

nominate five men as candidates for fifth man on the board. Each side will have the right to object to two of the five candidates. The remaining one would then automatically be the fifth man on the board. And their decisions are supposed to be final.

But that procedure is part of the contract which becomes null and void if any section of it is violated.

CIO officials explained to the workers at the union meeting that the battle was not over but rather just begun. Shop committee had to be organized on a real functioning basis. They pointed out it took the autoworkers more than one strike and negotiations to boost wage minimums. "We'll not be satisfied until we have the same minimum as the auto workers," the CIO officials told the strikers.

Now the CIO is going to open negotiations at the Ryan Aeronautical plant Co. employing 1,000 men. Then at North American which has 7,000 employes, Nenasco Manufacturing which has 1,000 and the Harvill Aircraft Die Casting Corp. with 800 workers.

Navy Yard Wage Swindle Incites Men

After fourteen years, the hitherto inactive Navy Wage Board finally came to life, upon the insistence of the AFL and CIO, and produced a 4 mills an hour, or 24¢ a week raise for skilled mechanics.

The Navy wage board after letting both the AFL and CIO, one year ago, make a wage survey of the private shops, took the matter of a suggested \$1.20—\$1.60 an hour mechanic's wage under advisement. The board acted a year ago and produced a ridiculous wage increase of 16¢ a week for mechanics. The CIO and AFL representatives on the wage board, Baker and Colvin accepted this recommendation. For this disservice to labor, both were expelled from their unions.

The unions protested, and the matter was given consideration by the Wage Board of Review, a higher body than the National Wage Board, with no organized labor representation and consisting of three Navy officers. It was this Naval "brass hat" committee which angered the tens of thousands of Navy Yard workers by their miserable wage award. Interestingly enough the wage schedule was decided in SECRET and made public just AFTER election.

"Improved" in Review

The board of review cut the apprenticeship increase of 10¢ an hour, originally recommended a year ago, to 4¢ an hour. The money, thus "saved" was used to "raise" the mechanics 25¢ a week, not even the price of a movie, as the men say.

This policy of swindling Navy Yard workers by robbing the apprentices (Peter) to pay the miserly 25¢ a week to the mechanics (Paul) has met with justified anger in all Navy Yards—in Boston, Brooklyn, Washington, Norfolk, and the West Coast. Protest meetings denouncing navy yard workers were organized. 1,200 machinists, for example, in Washington, D.C., members of the International Association of Machinists, local 175, denounced the action. Similar meetings have been held by other AFL unions, as well as by the CIO.

Great Hazards

When one considers the hazards the Navy yard men undergo in their daily work, the anger of the men at this insulting wage award is no surprise. A study of the newspaper reports indicate a pile of "accidents" and deaths to Navy Yard workers. There was, the story of John Krajniowski, a foundry worker, who was killed by molten metal from a centrifugal casting machine. There was the electrician helper Sterling Shannon, crushed by a crane. There was the Negro worker, who lost a leg while repairing an overhead crane. The men who die from working hard, facing fumes, overcrowding, dangerous machinery average as many as five or six a week in the New York Yard. The retirement age is 62, a ridiculously high age for such skilled and dangerous work.

"That's why the shipyard men are 'steamed up' and good and 'sore.' They are raring to actively protest

the quarter a week "raise", because they see the huge profits the government is paying the steel, copper, aluminum, and shipbuilding interests.

No Surprise

This action on the part of the Navy officers "open shop" committee is no surprise. The past record of these gentlemen protectors of capitalism prove their long service in the interests of the 60 families. For example, Captain Fisher of the Naval Shore Establishments, testified before the House Naval Affairs Committee, urging the scrapping of

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Deaths Prove Need of Mine Safety Bill

By BLAKE LEAR

Thirty-one miners were killed last week in an explosion at the Nelms mine of the Ohio and Pennsylvania Coal Company near Cadiz, Ohio.

John Owens, district UMWA president, stated: "This catastrophe could have been prevented if we had adequate inspection and regulation of mines. We will have to wait until after hundreds are slaughtered before the House of Representatives will give approval to the Neely bill, providing compulsory federal inspection of mines, which has been approved by the senate."

John L. Lewis likewise pointed out that explosions of this kind are preventable.

Third This Year

The disaster was the third in the Ohio-West Virginia panhandle this year. Seventy-two men were killed last March in a mine of the Hanna Coal Company and ninety-two in a mine of the Pocahontas Coal Corporation.

And now, once more is the tragedy of the mine town being played out—the wives, sweethearts, children, and friends huddled together at the shaft mouth, waiting for the broken bodies to be brought up; the town sinner as the Christmas season approaches; the investigating commissions which investigate nothing; the statements from the company—they cost nothing—stating that things in the mine were fine.

The mine workers and their brothers everywhere must let the government and its bosses know that the bettering of workers' conditions is not to be held up pending the completion of war preparations and the completion of the war itself. Business activity has reached unprecedentedly high levels. Profits are soaring. There is no necessity for labor to sacrifice its life.

Only through labor's pushing ahead and demanding its just due will tragedies such as struck this small Ohio coal town be averted.

Strike-Busting Bills Follow On Heels of War Moves

Add it all up for yourselves: President Roosevelt acts to release planes and other war materials needed by Great Britain.

Delivery of these planes is being made by 40 American pilots.

Lord Lothian is assured that Britain will get all the assistance it needs.

Congress backs the administration on proposed loans to China totalling (for a start) some \$160,000,000.

The President announces that he is going to put a stop to fire-ups in "national defense"—he means strikes.

Before and after that statement, Congressional bills to outlaw strikes, and otherwise restrict union activity, are introduced so rapidly, one after the other, that Roosevelt kiddingly tells reporters they pour into the Congressional hamper at the rate of three a minute.

Dies and the Attorney General intensify their investigations in all directions, and proceed to raise a terrific "red scare."

All this happens after the machinery for booming profits in war materials production has been thoroughly oiled.

And after Roosevelt has, in effect, consummated a military alliance with Britain and Canada, nations at war.

And after the military conscription of American youth has gotten under way.

Well, add it up, and you get only one result: WAR, AND COMING QUICKLY TOO.

Take the item about 40 American pilots flying planes to England for a starter.

Bombers are military contraband. Suppose a German ship or plane shoots one or some of these down. The United States becomes automatically involved in an act of war. American citizens, flying military equipment to England, are attacked by Germans. Can you imagine the newspaper hysteria that would be whipped up. Might this not be the little "incident" necessary for official entry into war?

(This is of a piece with the pact with Canada wherein the United States pledged its military help to a nation at war in the event that the latter is attacked—something, you more or less expect if you're at war.)

Then you take the loans to China. Now, if you know your history you know that "loans" to colonial countries are one of the slickest devices for imperialist control of the country.

In this case the United States is reasserting its interest in China, and is, in effect, warning Japan, that Uncle Sam does not intend to yield so juicy an imperialist plum without a struggle. The loan is by no stretch of imagination inspired by the need of China's masses. Right now that need is freedom from all kinds and brands of imperialist repression.

Thus, by act after act, the Roosevelt administration has made the meaning of its foreign policy clear: indirect participation in the world war for the specific imperialist interests of United States, with actual military intervention to follow when feasible. Already, it is being hinted (according to the Kiplinger letter, "circulated" privately to business-

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AFL Meet Acts on Unity, War and Racketeering

By DAVID COOLIDGE

During its two weeks of deliberation many things of importance, along with much that is trivial, were considered by the American Federation of Labor at its 60th convention in New Orleans. The main questions on which decisions were made by the convention were the attitude of the AFL toward the war; racketeering; unity with the CIO; labor standards and the war; and the organization's attitude toward representation on the various government war boards.

The first week of the convention was largely consumed by the usual routine organizational matters, speeches by outsiders, and the racketeering issue which was pressed by Dubinsky of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union. Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor, spoke, and asked the federation to fight against "dishonest or subversive" influences. Sir Walter Citrine appeared at the convention to represent British labor and to ask for support to England in the war against Hitler. Sir Walter was received warmly and with open arms by President Green.

Another convention speaker was Milo J. Warner, national commander of the American Legion. He urged "total preparation of our defenses now as a means to avoid war," and pledged the cooperation of the American Legion with the AFL to "promote peace" and other goals mutual beneficial to the AFL and the legion. Dan Tracy, assistant Secretary of Labor, and formerly head of the electricians, was present to make a speech. Tracy told the convention that they must go on building the Department of Labor "to the end of making it the greatest in the government." Green replied by saying that "at long last we have a fine entree into the Department. We can talk to Mr. Tracy as man to man. He speaks our language and we speak his."

Compromise on Racketeering

Dubinsky was present to fight for the fulfillment of the promises made him by Green before the ILGWU entered the AFL. Dubinsky was promised that the executive council would ask the convention to take from the council the right to suspend unions, and to vest this authority in the convention alone. Dubinsky was also promised that the one cent per capita tax would be eliminated and that the council would recommend strong action against racketeering in the AFL.

All of these proposals, except the one cent per capita tax, hit a snag in the convention. On the racketeering issue Dubinsky had presented a

resolution giving the executive council power to take action against unions that did not expel racketeers. Leaders of strong international unions were against the ILGWU resolution, and Dubinsky consented to a compromise resolution which called on all affiliated unions to adopt rules and amendments to their constitutions providing for action against officers or members "found guilty of betraying their trust or of having used their position for personal or illegal gain, or who have been convicted of acts casting discredit on the entire labor movement." The resolution continued with: "we submit with pride the record of honesty and integrity of thousands of trade union officials. A far larger number of men in the professions, in public life and in business have shown criminal tendencies and been found guilty."

The substitution of this compromise for the Dubinsky resolution was based on the executive council's claim that, since the internationals are autonomous, the federation cannot dictate to them how they run their affairs and administer their business. The federation, according to Green, can only exert moral pressure on its affiliates.

It should be emphasized that this mild action by the executive council is certainly no less correct than

the resolution proposed by Dubinsky. That resolution vesting authority in the executive council to remove individuals or unions, ostensibly for racketeering, would give reactionaries a lever against militants and radicals who were good honest union men. Furthermore, much of the racketeering in the AFL is either directly traceable to certain union leaders, or continued because these leaders, for one reason or another, close their eyes to the activities of racketeers in their organizations.

It is interesting that in the resolution on racketeering the federation found it necessary to include the following paragraph: "the opposition of our federation to communism and all forms of totalitarianism meets with public approval and support. Every effort we may make to keep our organization clean and self-disciplined will meet with the same public support." The convention also gave the country a promise to "keep our movement law-abiding" and demanded legislation to bar the Communist Party from the ballot in any state because it is the agency of a "foreign power."

The war question in the convention was really opened with Sir Walter Citrine's speech. Labor, railway brotherhood newspaper, reports

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LABOR ACTION
114 W. 14th Street
New York City

Dear Friends:

I am interested in learning more about the Workers Party and its fight against the bosses' war plans.

Name

Address

City

Max Shachtman

will contribute the fourth in his series of articles on Fascism and the World War in the next issue. This next article will deal with the position of the Lovestonites.

The issue will also contain: The third article by Dwight Macdonald on England at War. The continuation of the series on the History of the United States Empire by Albert Gates.

And an editorial statement on the much discussed question of getting food through to the workers of the blockaded countries.

With the Labor Unions— On the Picket Line

By David Coolidge

THE LESSON OF THE VULTEE STRIKE

The strikes in the Aluminum Co. plant at New Kensington, Pa. and at the Vultee airplane plant in California, have been ended. These two strikes, especially that at Vultee, set the whole pack of employer-wolves and their stooges in the capitalist press howling and yelping about the workers holding up the "defense" program. The Vultee strike was instigated by communists they said. In Congress, little two-by-four guys from the backwoods pool tax districts of the South, foaming at the mouth, prepared bills to make strikes in "defense industries" illegal. All this because the workers refuse to work any longer for 45 and 50 cents an hour while corporations are piling up huge profits and paying out millions in dividends to a bunch of loafers who do not work.

The chief gain of the Vultee strike, aside from the increase in wages and

improvement in working conditions, was the example these workers set of refusing to return to work until at least some of their demands were granted. They stayed on the picket line until the company came across. They didn't return to work and wait for some government "conciliator" and one of their leaders to beg the company to make a few minor concessions. This strike should be a lesson to workers in all the "defense" industries. The only thing the bosses understand is power and pressure. They and their representatives in Congress and on the press are only interested in profits. They howl about national defense being jeopardized; what they mean is that profits and dividends are being jeopardized.

Now is the time for all workers, all unions to make organized demands on the bosses, for the 30 hour week and a minimum of \$30 wages.

ON PROTECTING CIVIL RIGHTS OF DRAFTEES

The CIO convention passed a resolution entitled "Protection of Labor in Administration of Conscription Law." This resolution calls for the protection of the civil rights of men in the army; the right to vote, the right to communicate with their unions and families. The resolution also opposes the maintenance of "harsh and repressive discipline" in the army.

This resolution is all right as far as it goes, which isn't far enough. In this imperialist war the workers in the army must go far beyond the CIO in making demands on the ruling class. This is not the workers' war; they were not for conscription, they were forced into the imperialist army. The workers must have military training and this is the only interest they can have in the present imperialist army.

FRANCES PERKINS: JUST A TIME-WASTER

Frances Perkins, secretary of labor, told the AFL convention to be on guard against influence from "dishonest or subversive sources." Madame Perkins of course was speaking for the government and therefore for the employers. She means therefore by "dishonest and subversive" sources all those organizations and individuals which attempt to show workers how to raise their wages, and improve their standards of living to a degree commensurate with the wealth that the workers produce.

IMPOTENCE OF CRAFT UNION SET-UP DEMONSTRATED

The NLRB has ordered an election in the airplane plant of the Curtis-Wright Corporation at Robertson, Mo. The International Association of Machinists (AFL) asked for renewal of its contract. The company then threw a dummy company union together and stalled the IAM. The company union demanded that the NLRB certify it as the bargaining unit for all employees. The dummy union had no constitution or by-laws and presented the board with the constitution of the company union in the Curtis-Wright plant at Buffalo.

The craft union set-up came up against difficulties here as elsewhere.

"RED CAPS" LOSE, RAILROADS PROFIT

When the minimum wage law came in, railroads were forced to pay a minimum wage to station "red caps." The "red caps" had always existed off the tips they received from travelers. The railway companies decided that they could not pay the wage and decided to get the wages from the public. A fixed fee of 10 cents per parcel was set to be collected by the porters and turned in to the company. Out of this, the company would pay the "red cap" his minimum legal wage.

The wages and hours administration has discovered that the 10 cent per parcel system not only pays the

station porters' wage but at the Washington, D.C. union station, returned a profit to the railroads. This year the profit will be about \$50,000. On the basis of this, the wages and hours administration began an investigation of other cities, notably New York.

There has been a great deal of dissatisfaction with this system among the "red caps." They probably didn't know that the companies were making a profit on the arrangement, but they knew that something was wrong and that they were turning in far more money than they were being paid.

They Must Make Way For Death

By M. BELL

RAVENNA, Ohio.—Dawn—the lifting of a shroud—revealed the abandoned, mouldering farmlands of Portage County farmers, forcibly evacuated to make way for the multi-million dollar government ammunition loading plant. Seventy-five per cent of these farmers forced to give up the source of their lives—for death. As the skeleton of the death factory rises, many of them return for a last look at the fields they had to abandon. Those remaining stare in unbelief as cars from as far away as California and Florida drive by in search of the employment office.

"I sold my farm to the government and then sold my cows and chickens—everything I had to depend on for a living," said W.S. Kirkpatrick, 78, a farmer for 31 years. "The Hunkin-Conkey Co. gave me a job as watchman. Just the same it's a terrible blow to us. My wife is 70 and she's taking it mighty hard. Every time we look over these fields and think that from now on they'll grow up in weeds, or have munitions factories on them, it makes us heart sick."

Meanwhile, "thousands of men," according to employment officials, are seeking the means of life—from death. Roads are choked with traffic and a pall of dust hangs over the landscape as hundreds of cars of men seeking employment try to reach the headquarters of the Hunkin-Conkey Construction Co. No men are hired. Applicants are told to "see your business agent," since the company has a closed shop agreement with the AFL.

Whole families come from out of the state, sitting around in cars or spreading blankets on the ground. A man and his wife and two old English sheepdogs have walked all the way from Springfield, Ill., in the hope of finding work in the plant. They are housed in the fire department before resuming their endless trek for work.

It all means one thing. The clang of riveters speeding construction, the dust, the endless chain of cars, the hundreds of vacant farms, the thousands of men looking for work, all add up to this: That while the farmers and unemployed workers are struggling for the means of life, the government is preparing the means of death.

It's all right for the workers to be chivalrous and courteous to speakers at their conventions, but these workers don't need to believe what these speakers say, or heed their advice. Frances Perkins and the other outside speakers at the AFL convention do not represent the workers or their interests. As far as the working class is concerned such speakers as Frances Perkins and other such people are only useless window dressing and time wasters.

Forty Attend Phila. Forum

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—An audience of forty people heard Barney Martin speak on "Which Way Out: Reform or Revolution?" at a meeting sponsored by the Philadelphia Workers Forum. Presenting the meaning of the New Deal into the War Deal against the background of the history of France and Germany, the speaker stressed that socialism was still the only road out, regardless of "the new twists of modern reformists". The lecture ended with a series of questions and answers.

Two coming lectures were announced: Sunday, December 8—"The Real Situation in Russia" and Sunday, December 15—"Marxism and Freud".

The Soviet State

—is discussed in a lengthy article appearing in the November-December issue of the New Internationalist which will be ready for sale on Saturday, December 7.

In addition to other material, the new issue of New Internationalist presents an analysis of the trade union situation in this country by David Coolidge.

Lincoln Square Tenants Discuss Housing Action

Two hundred people, Negro and white, crowded into a meeting room at Transport Workers Hall on West 64th Street in New York City to discuss the proposed "Lincoln Square Area Housing Project."

Held under the auspices of the Lincoln Square Tenants League, the meeting was attended by the neighborhood's tenants who enthusiastically applauded the speeches of Rev. Herbert Banks, pastor of the Church of St. Cyprian, William Gaudin, housing secretary of the National Negro Congress, and Erminia Lawrence, treasurer of the Tenants League.

The audience listened attentively to the glowing picture painted by Frank Dedishheim, New York City Housing Authority representative, of the project which, it is proposed, will be built at 62nd and 63rd Streets between Amsterdam and West End Ave. But they indicated their reservations by pertinent questions of which this was the one most urgently asked: "What provisions will be made to rehouse the present tenants while the project is being built?"

Dedishheim answered that the law as written made no provision for that. Spokesmen for the tenants then criticized the injustice of a law which forced people to move from their homes without giving them adequate shelter until the project is completed. Rev. Banks pointed out that Negro tenants would be most seriously affected because of racial discrimination in apartment renting. The uncertainty into which tenants will be catapulted by the project was brought out by the further inadequacy of the law which, after ousting the tenants from the old flats, does not guarantee rooms in the new houses for those evicted, but merely provides that these may make application.

Speakers left no doubt that they wanted to see the end of the miserable slum tenements in which they now live. They favored the demolition of these old fire-traps. But they needed to have some assurance of finding decent dwellings at rents low enough for their income. This is a particularly acute problem for home relief recipients. These would be forced to seek shelter in homes as bad, or worse, as those from which it is proposed to free them. Rent allowances on relief are too meager for anything but the poorest of dwellings.

A suggestion that tenants form committees to call upon Mayor LaGuardia, Commissioner of Welfare Hodson and other city officials to force action, was warmly acclaimed. The tenants agreed to meet at St. Cyprian's Church on Thursday night, Dec. 5, to form such committees.

All tenants were urged to meet at the Church at 1 o'clock Saturday afternoon, Dec. 7, so that they might go in a body to Hodson's office at 902 Broadway and demand that Home Officials provide evicted tenants with low cost apartments.

Navy Yards—

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The Walsh-Healy as an "obstacle to national defense" because it preserves labor standards in companies having government contracts. At the same time, Fisher urged the scrapping of profit limitation, because that too, you see, is an "obstacle to national defense." What's good for the workers and bad for the bosses, is no good to the Navy brass hat clique.

Oh, these "defenders" of democracy get their just rewards. The Bethlehem Steel Co., the shipbuilding companies making super-profits out of "defense" contracts save nice berths for these servants of theirs. No wonder then that the recently retired Admiral Peoples got a fat job with a shipbuilding company last week.

The Navy's wage slashing policy is in harmony with their Jim-Crow, pro-imperialist line. This attack against the workers can only be met by 100% union organization in all shipyards, together with united militant protest. The Roosevelt pro-labor mask has again been torn off by these actions, revealing the government to be a venal tool of Wall Street and the 60 families.

Lovestone Group "Consolidates" Again

(From a group of members of the Independent Labor League of America (Lovestonites) we have received the following communication. We present it to our readers for the interesting information it contains.—The Editors.)

Dear Comrades:

Wednesday, Nov. 13 at the summarizing of the Independent Labor League of America pre-convention discussion on the war issue, Berttram D. Wolfe, reporter for the minority, resigned from the organization.

Reporting for the majority (Lovestone, Herberg, Herman et al faction) which represents pro allied views ranging from demands for limited aid to support of the recent battleship gift and calls for more, was B. Herman who holds an extreme pro-British view.

War Mongers Aim Shafts at Unions

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men") that a break of diplomatic relations with Germany is "on the horizon." This may come as a result of the Dies Committee disclosures of Nazi activities in the United States—which were known all the time, though just recently exposed. It may also come as a result of just such an "incident" as might arise from the downing of an American pilot flying bombers to Britain.

Entry by Spring?

Those in the "know" expect the war by spring. The very people who talk loudest about "all aid short of war," make no bones about the fact that military intervention is only a matter of "strategy." So for example, the New York Times reports a radio speech delivered by President James B. Conant, of Harvard University and a member of William Allen White's Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, as follows: "If America is determined to maintain the policy of 'all possible aid' to Britain," he asserted, "the question of active participation in the struggle becomes 'purely a matter of strategy' to be determined by military experts able to determine when and whether such help is needed."

And the Professor is telling the truth. When the military big-wigs of the administration decide that the time has come, we'll be whipped into war faster than it takes Roosevelt to say "I Hate War." And that time is not far off. Just wait until the conscripts start finishing their training.

New Anti-Labor Bills

How else explain the barrage of strike-busting bills and statements? We can't list them all. There are too many of them. The latest are bills introduced by Representatives Smith and Hoffman. The Smith Bill would make it illegal to require a person seeking employment in a "defense" industry to join a union. Representative Hoffman's bill would require persons getting jobs in war industries to sign a "yellow-dog" contract with the boss. Union-men take note!

Dear Mary—

So the Vultee strike is settled. Some of the details of the settlement are obscure, but you are nearer and can tell more about it. I am anxious to hear from you. I heard over the radio, although the newspapers don't mention it, that they are not going to hire back all those who struck. It sounded very much as if they would pick out the leaders, call them reds, and then not give them their jobs back. That's an old trick of the bosses and it is working better than ever these days. They did get a 55¢ minimum to be raised to 62¢ after three months work. That's good because a minimum with a union contract usually works—if the union keeps strong. A minimum without a contract doesn't mean a thing. Those minimums that were set up by the government with the help of the unions don't work so well. The bosses just keep right on chiselling.

But that arbitration clause in the Vultee contract doesn't sound so good. I may be wrong, but that arbitration clause! If you have to accept a decision it's a good thing to know whose going to make it. And the final arbitration is a compulsory Conciliation Board. Which automatically becomes final if no other recourse can be found. The future will largely depend on how well the men will make the Board sit up and take notice by the threat of the same kind of militancy which won them their strike.

I don't know about this Board, but what I've seen of arbitration boards they are N.G. They are usually made up of "liberal" business men (with lots of experience in nice-lady-like paternal, company unions), and college professors who know enough economics and mathematics to tell the boss how to make profit. Their last decision always hinges around—if the boss can't make his profit he'll have to close the shop and then how are you going to have a job. (The formula at Vultee will be a bit different—it'll go something like this—aren't you patriotic, aren't you willing to give the last drop of your energy, what do you mean by yelling for higher wages while the soldiers are giving their lives. That'll be what they say, but back of it all is higher and higher profits—and do they make them in war time.)

Those "liberal" business men and college professors would rather die than give you the right answer, even if they know it. It's very simple and can be said over and over again. For instance, I work in a shoe shop and my kids are without shoes. So I'll make shoes for my kids. And I'll swap the extra shoes I can make with the guy who raises wheat for flour. I know it gets complicated as you go on trying to figure it out. But if you start your thinking from there you can think through to a logical conclusion. But if you start from the Conciliation Board you'll never find an end. The only end is that there are store houses full of wheat and shoes, which aren't being sold because the price is held high so the boss can make his profit.

Wow—what sentences! But I guess you get the general idea. And if you want it in a simple sentence, I can do that too, produce for use and not for profit.

Sis's boy friend got a job in a steel plant here. They're both glad as it means they'll probably be getting married soon. That's good although it's not much fun now with the war and the draft hanging over their heads. I suppose we have to learn to take life day by day. That's what I tell Sis, but she wants a home and family, you know furniture, cooking, dusting, etc. There are millions like her, and it doesn't seem to me her chances are too good.

How's the family? Best to all and regards—

Sally

Hitler Pleases Stalin— Hounds French Jews As "Trotskyists"

The Jewish Examiner, a newspaper published for American Jewry, reports in its November 22 issue that Hitler, with an eye towards Stalin's approval, has been arresting French Jews on the sole charge that they are "Trotskyists." We don't know how authentic is this report. But there is no reason to doubt its accuracy.

The Axis partners serve each other. Hitler gives a demonstration of friendship for his Axis partner by taking care of Stalin's bitter enemies. And by the same gesture, he fulfills the requirements of his own persecution of the Jews. Any "Jew" can be called "Trotskyist." By the same token, any "Trotskyist" can be labelled "Jew." Hitler persecutes his critics under the one label, Stalin persecutes his critics under the other label. By the combination of labels in France, both are served.

Textile—

(Continued from page 1)

The company has been arming the few scabs, hoping to terrorize the workers in their other plants and prevent the strike from spreading. One of the scabs fired at a girl picket but missed her. The next day he was fined \$25.00 for the "careless use of a deadly weapon". The feeling among the workers ran so high that the local sheriff was forced to revoke the gun licenses of the company scabs and deputies.

At the time of this writing, the strike is still on, with the company offering nothing more than the promise of adding some part-time help.

Win Wage Increases

Four weeks ago the twisters at the Columbia Duck Mills went out on strike in demand for a wage increase corresponding with the rising cost of living. A week later the twisters were joined on the picket line by the entire mill of 1,300 workers. The strike was settled to-day with the company signing an agreement that provides for salary increases, holidays, five day week, shop committees, and no discrimination against any striker.

The Atlanta Woolen Mills in Atlanta, Georgia discharged the chairman and the assistant chairman of the Shop Committee in the wool carding department. A union committee called upon the company insisting that the men be put back on their jobs. The company refused and in less than an hour the entire mill was out on strike. The next day the company agreed to take the two men back, but the workers, realizing their strength, stayed out three days longer and forced through a 5% general increase in wages, and an understanding that the company will settle all grievances as soon as they arise.

Bosses Give In

The Union Mfg. Co., Union Point Georgia fired two outstanding militants in the hosiery and yarn mills. The workers responded as they did in Atlanta; the whole shop went out on strike and shut down the mill. The strike was settled in three days when the company agreed to put the two men back on their jobs.

The weavers at the Mayfair Plant of the Burlington Mills in Burlington, North Carolina are out on strike in protest against increased work loads and a reduction in wages.

Four members of the TWUA were fired for union activity at Inman, South Carolina. A strike threatened the boss to sit up and take notice. He knew that his class-mates were having picket lines around their factories. The four men are back to work and Local 291 is going to have a banquet to celebrate the victory.

Effective

These strikes and strike threats have forced other companies, that have been giving the TWUA the run around for years, to negotiate and sign agreements. The Lane Cotton Mills in New Orleans signed a union agreement covering the 1,500 workers who had voted for the TWUA by a margin of three to one from way back in 1937. The Profile Mills in Charlotte also hurriedly signed up with the union.

A worker-officer of one of the AWUA Locals well expressed the feelings of the southern textile workers, "I'm sure that Mr. Hillman and Mr. Rieve do not approve our neglect of Labor Boards, but our methods are mighty more effective."

accompanying situation in the I.L.L.A. even though Wolfe has not cared to publicize it and the Workers Age has maintained a suspicious silence on it thus far. We are forwarding copies to the S. Call, S. Appeal, and Labor Action.

For Revolutionary Socialist Unity from a gang who will continue to seek it.

November 26, 1940.

Join Workers Party For Labor Action—

A Marxist Analysis of—

THE FASCIST STATE AT WAR The Nazis and Their Blitzkrieg

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Dec. 15—PATRIOTS AND SOCIAL-PATRIOTS: Labor and Radical Tendencies in the War.

Dec. 22—WILL THIS WAR LEAD TO REVOLUTION? The Prospects Ahead for the Workers.

Of Special Interest to Women

By SUSAN GREEN

The Rising Cost of Living—So I order two containers of milk and a half-pint container of sweet cream. I put fifty cents on the counter. Two quarts of milk 23c—16c for cream—total 39c. Must get 11c change. But I get only 8c.

"What's this?" I ask, looking at the 8c and at the grocer.

"PRICES UP AGAIN," he says. "Milk two for 25c—cream 17c."

"For the love of mikel!" I say, because I don't swear in public, and at the same time I remember that I need eggs too. "Let me have a dozen white eggs, grade B," I say.

I count out 27c; that was the price last time I bought white eggs, grade B. "Four cents more, please," says the grocer.

"I want the grade B," I say, thinking he made a mistake.

"They are grade B. Today they're 31c a dozen. PRICES UP AGAIN," he says.

A general idea of why the storekeeper keeps telling you and me, "PRICES UP AGAIN," is given in a report to the Department of Justice which points out that the "food industry functions badly for both consumers and farmers". Not being a poor farmer nor a poor housewife, the Department of Justice needed a long report to learn about that.

This report on the food industry contains some very damning information. It shows how rich corporations keep food from starving people—so that the rich can become richer. Here are some of the facts.

Big associations of bakers have destroyed small independent bakers by price cutting. Having a monopoly in the field, they then fixed bread prices to suit themselves.

By cornering the market and preventing competition, certain meat slaughterers have increased prices an average of five cents a pound.

Poultry prices are fixed at make-believe auctions where the stooges of the poultry dealers make abnormally high bids which become the standard for "normal" prices.

Boss associations of fishing boat owners and fish canners control certain varieties of fish throughout the United States and fix their prices. The entire catch of one variety of fish is handled throughout the country by one group of brokers, and they fix the price at their own sweet will.

By the practices of dairymen's associations they can maneuver increases as high as 3c in the retail price of milk, without the farmer getting anything out of the increase—while the poor have to consume less milk because they can't pay the increased price.

One company already controls 80% of the national market in processed cheese and is making an effort to control the rest of the market.

Such is the greedy use of their power practised by the bosses of the nation's food—without a "national defense emergency". Imagine what they will do now when they can pile up their profits under the folds of the flag.

So now, on the basis of this report, an investigation is going to be made which will cover "all the major items in the family food budget". Particular attention will be given to bread, milk, meat, fish, cheese, canned fruits and vegetables, and fresh fruits and vegetables.

Nobody but a chicken just hatched out of an egg, will believe that an investigation by the Department of Justice will put the food industry on a basis so that it will function for the benefit of the consumer and the farmer. We've heard that one many times before.

Government files are full of reports exposing just such flagrant frauds as the above. Millions of dollars have been appropriated in past years for investigations which showed up greedy corporations maneuvering the milk out of the mouths of babes. Thousands of hours have been consumed by legislators discussing and passing more and more laws, presumably to make such terrible practices impossible.

Such "crusading" reports, investigations, legislation, have a habit of coming to the front pages of the press when housewives all over the country look a certain way at the grocer when he says, "PRICES UP AGAIN".

But what has been the result of all these "crusades" against profiteers? Have the reports, investigations, legislation, done any good? If so, this year 1940 ought to show it. Let a statement by the Department of Justice of the boss government itself give the answer:

"At one end of the food industries lies wholesale malnutrition among consumers due to their inability to afford an adequate diet. At the other end lies a population of producing farmers who must sell an abundance of food at distress prices so low as to threaten them with bankruptcy."

This is another way of saying that the bosses and the banks, which have a stranglehold on the food industry, as they have on all other industry, reap a double harvest in 1940 as in 1930, in 1920, in 1910—only more so. This is the result after decades and decades of "trust-busting", of "fighting monopolies". All the reports, investigations, laws and "crusades" are like water on the backs on the profit-grabbers.

Do you want to know why, you housewives who stare with malenvance at the innocent grocer when he says, "PRICES UP AGAIN"?

(1) Because their stranglehold on industry is not taken away from them—THEY REMAIN THE BOSSES.
(2) Because the government that is supposed to curb their greed is their own government—A BOSS GOVERNMENT.

This system of boss-owned industry and boss government has proved itself a complete failure. All it can say for itself in this year 1940, is the following:

"More than FORTY-FIVE MILLION PEOPLE are limited to diets so poor that they lack essential food elements. These families are below the safety line. Not all of them feel hunger and not all have clinical symptoms of deficiency diseases such as pelagra, beriberi or scurvy. But those who must live on such a diet for prolonged periods suffer from chronic fatigue, lethargy, various digestive disorders and divers aches and pains, and have a lowered resistance to disease."

What can be a greater insult to the intelligence of these poor people than to offer them another futile investigation!

What can be a greater insult to their spirit than to think they will continue to put up with the system of boss-owned industry and boss government!

PHILADELPHIA READERS—

You are invited to attend a lecture by
DAVID COOLIDGE
National Labor Secretary, Workers Party
WHICH WAY AMERICAN LABOR?
A first-hand account of the CIO convention will be presented.
Sunday, December 22, 1940, 8:30 P.M.
715 PINE STREET

England at War

2. Bombs and Politics in Great Britain

A Series of Articles by Dwight Macdonald

Before this war began, we all read lurid prophecies in the Sunday supplements about the terrific devastation and massacre air bombing would cause in big cities. These predictions have been borne out, but only in the case of cities with little or no anti-aircraft defenses: Barcelona, Warsaw, Rotterdam. The German air force has been bombing English cities for over three months now with the greatest intensity, and yet, according to official figures, during the months of September and October, in all England only 13,288 civilians were killed and 19,310 wounded. In Coventry, worst bombed of all English cities, there were only 422 "known" deaths. The effect of the German air attack on England has so far not been to cause that chaos, panic, and dramatic breakdown of society the Sunday papers expected. These effects are slower-working, less dramatic and sensational—but highly significant for all that.

The Shelter Issue

In a city under bombardment week after week, class politics takes new and peculiar forms. The usual forms of class struggle tend to be suspended in an armistice by mutual agreement while every one concentrates on the main job: to defend life and limb from the common enemy in the sky. In London today strikes and municipal elections have become subordinate forms of class struggle. Thus the German air attack is a leveling, a "democratizing" force. However, in the course of this common struggle to survive and to beat back the enemy attack, the old class conflicts and injustices reappear in different forms. The great political issue in London today is the air-raid shelter question.

The Chamberlain government, during the "quiet" period of the war, dealt with the matter of shelters as it did with all other problems, with extreme ineffectiveness. Sir John Anderson, Minister of Home Security, adopted a policy of shallow, tin-roofed, individual backyard shelters. These "Anderson shelters" gave some protection from flying bomb splinters and debris, but were useless against a direct hit or even a large bomb blast nearby. They were also too small to be slept in—and, since the raffles last all night, shelters must be first of all dormitories.

When the raids began in earnest this fall, the masses of the East End—the great working class slum district which, being near the docks and factories, was bombed worst—took matters into their own hands and crowded into whatever deep holes in the ground they could find. The subway stations were the most obvious safe refuge. The London Transport System tried to forbid this mass invasion of its stations, but it was found to be impossible to enforce the prohibition. The people just forced their way in and spent the night.

But only a small proportion of the London masses could get into the subways. A tremendous popular demand arose for construction of large-scale "deep shelters", where thousands of people could spend the night in safety. There were some demonstrations organized and led by Communists. A newspaper report reads: "The group from Stepney who crowded into the Savoy Hotel on

the Strand last night and demanded shelter were obviously under Communist guidance. They delivered a prepared speech demanding the government provide deep bombproof shelters. They were allowed to stay in the hotel's shelter until the all-clear sounded and then they were rushed out by the police." Such invasions of the big luxury hotels clearly have revolutionary implications—the very fact that a mob of people "from Stepney" should venture to set foot inside the Savoy is remarkable. So dangerous did the class tensions over the "shelter problem" become that Parliament held several secret sessions on it, apparently without coming to any conclusion.

The Labor Party Takes Over

When Churchill revised his cabinet this fall, he removed Hugh Morrison, with Bevin the outstanding Laborite leader, from the Supply Ministry and put him in Anderson's place as Minister of Home Security. This was a really brilliant stroke of Tory politics, since it put a Laborite in a post where he would have to bear the brunt of rising popular indignation over the lack of shelters. Morrison at once proceeded to do his duty: his first public statement was an unqualified endorsement of the Anderson policies: "There are people who are demanding deep shelters, I am bound to say, for mischievous political reasons, and sometimes doing it in ways which are almost fifth column in their effect. I am not always sure they are not fifth-column in intention." Later on he underlined his opposition to any effort to provide deep shelters, actually quoting Anderson's famous formulation—"In practice, there is no 100% safety."

Here, as everywhere, the leaders of the Labor Party are forced by the very nature of their politics to put themselves in opposition to the deepest interests and desires of the masses they are "leading". Morrison is sitting on a powder keg, as is indicated by the results of a recent Gallup poll taken in England and printed in the *New York Times* for Nov. 30. This showed that of those interviewed, 66% "thought the government had been ill-advised in concentrating on surface shelters", 19% had "no opinion", while only 15% backed the Anderson-Morrison policy.

Nor is the scarcity of deep shelters Morrison's only headache. Conditions in the makeshift mass shelters are indescribable—no ventilation, a few buckets for all sanitary arrangements, no bunks or cots, people packed together so close as to touch each other. On the other hand: "In the big hotels, there is plenty of comfort... At the Savoy, soft mattresses have been installed. There is a maid in attendance from night until morning. There is a man who stands by just to turn the snorers over on their sides. Warm drinks are served at bedtime and it is all very cosy."

This glaring contrast between rich and poor shows that all are not "equal under the bomb". Likewise, with the treatment people get who are bombed out of their houses. "In the expensive West End district," writes a correspondent, "people dug out of their shelters after a bombing are immediately taken off in taxis to the hotels, given hot drinks and warm beds in an underground

shelter. But some of these people in East London's poor districts wandered about for 13 hours, having lost every possession in the world except what they stood up in, and were directed to a series of addresses which involved as much as eight miles of walking before they were cared for."

The great question in England under bombardment is how long the Churchill-Labor government can keep control of the masses who see every day, in a more dramatic and direct way than is ever possible in peacetime, the grim realities of a modern class society.

THE WORLD AT WAR

There Is One Thing That The European Working Class Gets Plenty Of: -- Promises

By MAX STERLING

When Hitler promises the workers of Germany that after his victory there will be socialism and brand new homes for all that is little more than a promise. After all they have to be given something in return for their hunger and the sacrifice of their lives. So he gives them promises. Of course nobody is fooled by Hitler's promises. The German workers are still wondering what happened to that automobile that each one of them was supposed to get. Besides, what's the use of having an automobile when you can't afford to buy a gallon of ersatz gas.

Hitler is not the only one making promises. The English capitalists are making big money out of the war, that and under the circumstances, there is little choice for them but to make promises. They are worried and Hitler is not the only one who worries them. As one substantial Englishman put it: "What worries us most is that the poor here should find out how luxuriously the other half lives and how comfortably established are the rich in their air conditioned shelters, complete with cocktail bars and dance music."

Thus, the English ruling class competes with Hitler and promises the masses nothing less than—Revolution! Of course the English ruling class can never get themselves to utter the word "Revolution"—there is really no tradition for that! So Mr. Ernest Bevin the Labor Minister steps to the fore and says: "Is not the common defense of civilization producing under our very eyes what represents a Revolution in thought and outlook?" And the English working man who is asking for higher wages to offset the high cost of living asks himself "What can I buy with a Revolution" in thought and outlook and what kind of a Revolution is it that defends the civilization of capitalist profits?"

The demand for higher wages by the workers in the shipbuilding, engineering and railway industries was met, not by a promise, but by the stern order: "Go back to work."

If the English ruling class finds it hard to talk about "Revolution" they are pretty glib with the word Democracy. A short time ago, an especially revealing example of English democracy in action was reported. There is an English soil a portion of the Czech army that got out of Czechoslovakia before Hitler took over.

The rank and file of this Czech army protested about the composition of the Czech government in exile and their military leaders. They charged that they were not genuinely anti-fascist and democratic. Matters became so bad within the army that the British government to arrest more than 500 soldiers who had agitated against the existing leadership. The British government "democratically" complied by segregating the soldiers and signed an agreement with the Czech military authorities which turned the Czech soldiers over to the tender mercies of the Czech commander-in-chief who was to have the authority to deal with the Czech soldiers as though they were in their own country.

Another example of British democracy is this classic by Herbert Morrison: "It was impossible to build deep air shelters for Everybody". We conclude from this that it was just a fortuitous coincidence that the rich all got their deep air raid shelters.

The Indian masses have received the following taste of British democracy: "The government of India has forbidden publication of any matter calculated directly or indirectly to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war to its successful conclusion or of any matter relating to the holding of meetings or the making of speeches for the purpose directly or indirectly of fomenting such opposition."

A number of Indian nationalists have already tested out this law and were promptly imprisoned. Nor did the British "democrats" deal gently with them. For making a speech against the war the Indian Nationalist leader Nehru received the harsh sentence of four years of rigorous imprisonment.

To further their war for "democracy", "Revolution" and capitalist civilization Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production urged "the people of the United States to consider giving Britain credits and further help in the Atlantic." "Victory" he said "depends on the battle for America."

But the people of the United States have no reason whatsoever to yield their sweat and blood in the preservation of the decrepit capitalist system of England and America. For the workers of the United States the battle for America is here on these shores, and that battle is the battle for peace, plenty and socialism.

The Right Honorable Winston Churchill

(We present this week an article written for us by a Canadian comrade. We are trying to make arrangements for a regular weekly news-letter from Canada, a nation at war.—The Editors)

TORONTO, Canada—To keep British labor quiet during World War I, the British General Staff devised a slogan: "Let's fight to make England a land fit for heroes to live in". Today we are being treated to all sorts of fancy statements by Winston Churchill about a finer and better England after the war. Newspapers, magazines, the radio are used to build up the picture of Churchill as the tried and true friend of labor. If not the Messiah, labor's very Messiah, Churchill is pictured as at least a John the Baptist, preaching the doctrine of a wider, nobler democracy, in which labor shall come into its own and reap ample reward for its present sacrifices and sufferings.

But after the last war, England and the Empire turned out to be not a land fit for heroes to live in, but a land that only heroes were fitted to keep alive in. And as for Churchill...

"DEMOCRACY"—CHURCHILL STYLE

There was the Boer War. But perhaps Winston's activities then should be attributed to adventurous youth. There was his switch of parties under rather fishy circumstances. But perhaps, he hadn't even yet grown up. Winston surely had reached years of discretion and mature judgment by 1913. Let us then commence there, using only such earlier background as is necessary to give a true picture of the new Messiah.

In 1906, Campbell-Bannerman ousted the Tories and became the Liberal prime minister of Great Britain. He then learned that during Anglo-French diplomatic conversa-

tions, it had been decided that "in the event" of war, 100,000 British troops and 42,000 horses were to be sent to France; that the contingent would land on the third day "so that the entire British Army might be on French soil on the fourteenth day". Sir John Fisher and the French Naval attaché had "all naval plans prepared". By 1913 Winston Churchill had taken charge of the British Fleet and had come into full knowledge of both the navy's and the army's commitments.

Churchill was already handing out advance samples of his brand of democracy. The whole matter of his "honorable" gentlemen's agreement to help France was never embodied in a formal alliance, because "the inner ring of ministers, soldiers, sailors (of whom Churchill was then chief—Ed.), diplomats and the King" "did not dare then to admit what they were doing, to Parliament, or even to the Cabinet". They decided, as a memorandum by Lord Sanderson, approved by Sir Edward Grey, clearly shows, not to "make Parliament aware of the obligations that it was incurring". They even decided that it "was not wise to bring the question before the Cabinet!"

But prolonged secrecy begat suspicion. Suspicion begat Lord Hugh Cecil. On March 10, 1913, Lord Cecil asked in the House if there existed "an obligation, not a treaty obligation, but an obligation arising out of... diplomatic negotiations, to send a very large force out of this country to operate in Europe."

The Prime Minister replied with a "most emphatic assurance there was no agreement, verbal or in writing, express or implied, etc., under which such a force was to be sent to the continent."

But to such absolute disregard of the democratic method, outright falsification of documents was now

added. When Hansard appeared in print, it was found that the Churchill group had withheld the Prime Minister's reply and substituted "I ought to say that it was not true".

Suspicion increased. By July 1913, the uninformed and ignored three-quarters of the Cabinet organized a peace bloc, headed by Harcourt. Churchill then so democratically bowed to the demands of the this three-to-one Cabinet majority that, according to Lord Asquith, "Nothing would do him but immediate mobilization". To this astounding statement, Lord Asquith added this description of the sackcloth and ashes worn by the repentant "Winston, who has got on all his war paint," and "is longing for a sea fight in the early hours of the morning, to result in the sinking of the Goeben".

THE MAN THEY COULDN'T TRUST

But lies, forgery, cabal intrigue against colleagues and absolute dictatorship did not suffice. No less an authority than Sir Austen Chamberlain has revealed how Churchill kept the war-mongering section of the Tories posted as to the happenings in the Liberal Cabinet, of which he, Churchill, was a trusted member. In other words, according to Chamberlain, Churchill broke his most solemn oath of office and betrayed even his own class cronies, including his chief, the prime minister, who had given him his job.

And after that, who dares venture a guess, at this time, by what secret intrigues and dictatorial, cabal methods, Britain finds herself at war again and Churchill—so long kept from the highest office because his closest associates dared not trust him—has now become Britain's prime minister?

LEST WE FORGET

And who of us who went through

News From Our West Coast Correspondent

West Coast labor is stirring in a manner reminiscent of the good old days of the CIO drives in 1936-1937.

Coming at a time when Roosevelt is doing his damndest to keep the labor movement in control, and to outlaw strikes for higher wages and better conditions, the present upsurge testifies that the last word has not yet been heard by a long shot from the union ranks.

In the Northwest, AFL and CIO lumber workers unions got together for a joint drive against the timber barons for higher wages.

Representatives from the AFL Lumber and Sawmill workers union and the CIO Woodworkers of America met with 360 delegates from 76 local unions last night and pledged to do everything necessary to effect as broad a tie of the northwest lumber industry as possible.

Read that again. The AFL and the CIO ranks uniting in a fight against their common enemy, the bosses. That's the kind of unity the labor movement needs. That's the kind we support.

Plans of the lumberjacks include a strike to begin at five Everett, Washington, lumber mills, involving 2,000 workers. This is to help effect an industry-wide tie-up already in process by virtue of a strike at Seattle, and the shut down of ten mills at Tacoma. The AFL union controls the Everett workers.

Unless you've tried to organize in the deep South or some of the towns of the mid-west, it is difficult to appreciate really what a tremendous victory the CIO achieved at Vultee, in Los Angeles.

Ever since the McNamara bombing case in 1910 at the Los Angeles Times building, this city has proudly boasted of its open shop tradition. Yes, a few craft unions were organized, and the CIO made some headway in the past, but essentially the city was open shop. Its posters still brag of this advantage to manufacturers.

The rapid expansion of the aircraft industry brings an almost inevitable change in this condition. 65,000 proletarian workers in this area are a different force than the craft unions, or the small needle trades shop workers, or the small rubber plants.

Vultee strikers, for example, didn't have to worry about scabs. The industry is having a problem hiring qualified men. They couldn't find 3,800 production workers if they searched the whole country. Not experienced aircraft workers.

This contributed greatly to the ower of the strikers. And to their confidence.

Since 1,400 of them went from 50 and 52½ cents an hour to 62½ cents an hour, besides getting vacations with pay and other usual demands, the Vultee workers were jubilant upon returning to work.

Now this city has 3,800 workers who, unconsciously perhaps, are all CIO organizers. The strike, as is every first strike to a worker, was a real experience in life. It is something one talks about to friends and neighbors. The extra money coming in helps a lot.

Labor learned it could strike and win. Many workers here didn't believe you could even strike, let alone win. That's the way the newspapers put it. And too many people believe what they read in newspapers, especially about what they say about the union movement.

The SWOC announced the signing of two contracts here which names the CIO union as the exclusive bargaining agency and bring substantial gains to the workers.

Over 1,000 employes at the Consolidated Steel Corp. plant are effected by the union contract which includes: preferential union hiring, a 65 cent minimum wage and the automatic five cent an hour increase in the hiring rate after six months. Also there is a provision for an 8-hour day, five days a week, with time and a half for overtime, and vacations with pay. Grievance and arbitration procedure was also agreed to.

The other contract was signed with the Pacific Gas Radiator Co., and contains substantially the same provisions as the Consolidated agreement.

A last minute compromise derailed a threatened strike of 1,000 ship yard workers at San Pedro this week over a wage dispute. The ship yards involved are engaged in building small craft for the Navy's ar program.

Filipino workers in the celery fields were just given an AFL charter and are pressing for a union agreement which will give them more adequate compensation for their back-breaking toil at starvation wages. Very unfortunately, however, the Filipinos include in their demands the replacement of all Japanese workers by their own countrymen. Apparently they have learned little about the need for class solidarity from their own many years of racial persecution.

There will be a real upswing in union activity among the agricultural workers in California in the coming season. The war boom with its hiring of many men in California cities slackens off the huge surplus of labor for agricultural work. The much higher wages and better conditions in industrial plants has opened the eyes of the migratory workers too, already bitter about their miserable existence. Employers are plenty worried already.

Emil Ludwig, pot-boiler biographer of great men, is contributing his two cents worth of ignorance to Hollywood's mental blankness tonight with a lecture on the future of Europe.

Mr. Ludwig hints that there will be a revolution in Europe sometime during or after the war, and that society might take "some sort of collectivist form." Translated from the confusion in his fat skull, this simply means that Europe faces the revolution of the proletariat against capitalism. It means our day is coming. And that now is the best time to build the revolutionary party. Mr. Ludwig, to be sure, will be silent on these questions. You can't earn \$500 telling the people the truth.

JACK WILSON

SAN FRANCISCO READERS—

YOU

Are Invited to Join In A

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION OF

CURRENT EVENTS

Each Tuesday Evening, at 8 p.m.

Room 223, 628 Montgomery Street

What are YOUR problems in connection with the WAR, the DRAFT, the ELECTIONS, the whole swiftly moving tide of current WORLD PROBLEMS?

JOIN IN WORKING THEM OUT!

Auspices: Workers Party

Editorials

OUR PROGRAM AGAINST THE WAR

1. Not a man, not a cent for Wall Street's war. All war funds to the unemployed.
2. For a rising scale of wages to meet increasing cost of living. Thirty Thirty—\$30 weekly minimum wage—30-hour weekly maximum for all workers.
3. Expropriate the Sixty Families. For Government ownership and workers control of all war industries—aviation, steel, chemicals, railroads, public utilities, etc.
4. Against both imperialist war camps. For the Third Camp of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples.
5. Let the people vote on war. For the right of youth to vote at the age of 18.
6. Abolish secret diplomacy. Open the files of the State Department.
7. Withdraw all armed forces from territory outside the United States. Free the colonies. Hands off Latin America.
8. Against compulsory military training and conscription.
9. For the defense of civil liberties and workers' rights. Stop the persecution of aliens. Against the M-Day Plans and war-time dictatorship.
10. For full social, economic and political equality for Negroes. End discrimination against Negroes in industry and trade unions.
11. For an independent Labor Party.
12. For Workers' Defense Guards against Fascist and vigilante attacks.
13. No confidence in the Roosevelt government. For a workers' government and a people's army.
14. For Peace through Socialism. For the Socialist United States of the Americas, for the Socialist United States of Europe, and for the World Socialist Federation.

The Cesspool of Social-Patriotism

Of all the enemies of the working class, the most detestable and poisonous are scoundrels like those who inhabit the headquarters of the Social Democratic Federation at 7 East 15th Street, New York City, and bring out that filthy sheet called the New Leader.

These scabs and strike-breakers, who claim to be a part of the labor movement and who also claim the right to speak for the workers, recently ran a piece on the Vultee strike. In the November 23 number of their paper they ran a ribbon line: "Reds Cripple Vital Plane Production at Vultee." In the body of the article they said: "British warfare will be crippled and United States defense delayed for months. This would dovetail into Soviet foreign policy." Further along, the article says, "it is the contention of labor experts associated with the Commission on National Defense that the strike could have been avoided since the company is willing to grant all union requests but that of wages, and the wage issue affects only some 480 employees earning the low basic rate of fifty cents an hour."

The New Leader (which, in its next issue, had the temerity to brag that it had scooped the nation in its red-baiting attack on the strike) ignores the fact that the average age of the men at Vultee is 24 years, that they voted 2,557 to 57 for the strike, that they were protesting against the very low wages in the industry, especially at a time when the aircraft industry is piling up immense profits. Furthermore, the New Leader editors know damn well that the young men who work at Vultee are not communists nor socialists, not anything else but average young Americans who simply want a chance to eat well, wear decent clothing and live under sanitary conditions. These are the decisive facts, regardless of Stalinist influence in the strike leadership.

Again, what is the New Leader talking about when it says that the company had agreed to all demands except the demand for an increase in wages? To render aid to imperialist England and to the bloated coupon clippers who own the Vultee stock? No, they like all other workers are toiling in the factories to improve their economic condition, to get money in order that they and their families may have a better life. They are not like the decrepit old fossils of the New Leader and the Social Democratic Federation who live off of subsidies and income from misguided workers whom they betray weekly.

The New Leader continues with its stinking and traitorous article. Its reporter learned from government officials "that other CIO unions planned disruptive strike activity as soon as Vultee was settled." They moan and wail at the prospect of their low paid workers who may also make some demands on their rich bosses. These workers and their families

should starve so that the 60 Families can become richer and poor little "democratic" England can get more planes to protect its imperialist interests. A lot of England's planes, you see, were used up in years past carrying "democracy" to the natives of India and Africa. To fight for food and a decent living is a "disruptive" activity in the minds of the strike-breakers on the New Leader.

They close their criminal anti-working class and slimy article by giving a boost to Martin Dies. "The Dies Committee" you see, "have repeatedly warned the government to be on guard against a West Coast outbreak of defense sabotage." The Vultee workers are saboteurs, fifth columnists, according to the New Leader. They take their stand, as usual, with the bosses, with representative Cox of Georgia and the other ruling class stooges in Congress. But they fail to mention the fact that this great patriot Cox, with whom they agree, comes from the poll tax state of Georgia, where white and black workers are disfranchised.

The leaders of the Social Democratic Federation knife the working class in the back. They know what they are doing. They are old hands at betrayal. They have had years of experience at sabotage of workers' struggles. They pose as opponents of the Stalinist betrayers. This is a fraud. The only difference between them and the Stalinists is one of degree. Their betrayals are less dangerous because they are so much smaller than the Stalinists and do not hold state power. Another reason is that they lack guts and courage. They only want to save their own rotten carcasses and hold on to their comfortable mode of living, off the stray crumbs of the ruling class.

The workers should be profoundly thankful that these stool-pigeons have only a small influence in the labor movement.

Draft Rejections

The newspapers report that "Draft Rejections Are Surprisingly High." Where the army had expected a 2 per cent rejection rate, the actual rate of those rejected for physical disabilities is 15 per cent. Actually the rate of rejection is much higher, because these 15 per cent are those who have been rejected by army doctors after being passed by Draft Board doctors. Of all those reporting for examination by Draft Board doctors, the rejection rate is approximately 60 per cent.

There is a moral in all this. And it is not a surprising one. Why be surprised that the youth of the nation are physically unfit—bad teeth, bad hearts, bad lungs? These are a generation of youth brought up in depression and crisis. Decent food, decent medical care, decent dwellings—these are unknown to many millions of American youth.

There are in this land of riches and wealth 52,000,000 Americans who are under-fed. Not starving (though many of them are), just under-fed. And healthy bodies are not built on malnutrition. Strong limbs and lungs are not shaped on a lousy diet fed youth in dank tenements or shacks.

Be it remembered that the draft officials had previously announced that draftees would not be rejected for "minor" ailments—just so that they were in reasonably fair condition for patching. Thus, the youth who are being rejected by the army are obviously those who are require something more routine medical correction.

A surprise indeed in this world of want and exploitation!

"Democracy"

LABOR ACTION recently reported the expulsion of thirteen anti-war students from the University of Michigan by proxy Alex Ruthven. Now comes a sequel: Two honor students, editors of the campus paper, have been suspended from the school for publishing a letter to the editor protesting the expulsion of the thirteen students.

Need we add that proxy Ruthven is very much concerned with preserving "democracy" . . . in Europe.

**For Labor Action—
Join the Workers Party**

AFL Convention Acts on War, Unity, Union Racketeering

(Continued from page 1)

that Citrine's address "was by far the most dramatic of any given during the convention. Veteran, grizzled labor leaders found it hard to keep from weeping. The mouths of many quivered, and tears glistened in many eyes. All were deeply touched."

After reading through Sir Walter's speech it is difficult to determine just what the "grizzled labor leaders" were weeping over. After recounting the story of the "terror unloosed" by Nazi hordes on Britain, of death and destruction strewn over his homeland . . . Sir Walter told how the British trade union movement had "surrendered the right to strike . . ." And also that labor had agreed to unlimited extension of the working hours to as many as 80 a week. The maximum now, however, is only 60 hours a week according to Sir Walter. When we read this speech of the Secretary of the British Trade Union Congress, and learned about the weeping of the grizzled AFL veterans, we wondered whether or not the weeping was occasioned by the surrender of the right to strike and the labor's consent to the 80 hour week? Furthermore, there was another "terror unloosed" that Sir Walter did not mention. In many respects it is the more significant terror: the terror unloosed over India and Africa by British imperialism. On this terror, the knighted labor leader made no report to the convention.

Sir Walter pleaded for America's help, the help of trade unionists in the U.S. (That was really the purpose of his journey to this country.) When he finished, "President Green responded in a voice breaking with emotion." He said that America will produce as never before to help "our friends . . . win the battle for democracy. The American Federation of Labor will make it our chief object to send a stream of war materials, of all the things Britain needs in her hour of deepest need." The convention officially went on record for all aid to England short of war.

The convention also went on record supporting the "defense program" not only for the United States but for the whole western hemisphere. The convention fervently prayed for the victory of England because, "she stands as the last outpost in the Old World in the defense of the democratic form of government."

Unity Question

On the matter of AFL-CIO unity, the convention continued its "peace committee" and instructed the committee to communicate with the CIO asking for resumption of negotiations. Green said that no conditions would be set in advance but that he did not expect anything to be accomplished because John L. Lewis was still head of the CIO miners. Green's attitude was that not only should Lewis resign from the CIO presidency but also as head of the mine union.

The convention adopted a resolution forbidding state and local central organizations from considering communications from CIO unions. There was dissent by a few delegates who claimed that such action would hinder unity moves and close the door to any cooperation between the organizations. Another interesting commentary on the unity situation was the position of Green when he told Madame Perkins that the AFL would cooperate with her if she would recognize that the AFL, and not the CIO, was entitled to speak for American labor.

War-Time Demands

The convention declared that while labor is "thoroughly patriotic," the introduction of undemocratic practices would be looked upon by the AFL as a blow at the "soul of what we would defend." The convention said that majority rule must continue, that the war program must be in the hands of civilians, that labor must be represented by persons of its own choosing.

When the U.S. enters the war the AFL would have three demands: Universal obligation to service for defense—industrial or military—under democratic conditions. "Labor should have representation on all policy-making and administrative agencies and draft boards." "Labor standards and other provisions for social welfare must be maintained under emergency conditions as essential to efficient production, as well as to national morale."

Convention Similarities

There are many things which might be said in connection with the above statement, but we will have to reserve comment to future numbers of LABOR ACTION when we will have more to say about both the AFL and CIO conventions. The points of similarity in the demands of the two

bodies must, however, be pointed out now. Both conventions were positive in the demand for the retention of the social security acts, including the forty hour week. In the consideration of the unity question both organizations said that no matter what the probability for or against unity, it was their duty to prosecute a vigorous organizing campaign among the unorganized. The AFL resolution said: "in connection with the subject of peace negotiations, attention must be called to the large number of wage-earners who are still unorganized and unable to advance their wages and improve their conditions of employment. Regardless of the trend taken by peace negotiations, it is mandatory that the AFL make use of all its agencies so that trade unionism may be brought to the assistance of those who are at present

unorganized. This is a duty and responsibility which we cannot and must not evade."

The leadership of the AFL and the CIO have before them the task of carrying their convention decisions into action. The pressure on both organizations will be the same and will come from the same sources, the government and the bosses. In their "hour of need" the bosses will make no distinction between the two unions. The interests of the workers in the two organizations are identical.

Perhaps under the pressure of the war, with governmental and boss terror, and with the guidance of the politically advanced workers, the masses in the AFL and CIO will discover this. Then they will effect unity for their own protection and for winning their demands.

Our Readers Take the Floor. . .

TIME TO DEMAND THE SLIDING SCALE OF WAGE

Comrade Editor:

Iron Age, weekly steel magazine, said today (Nov. 27, 1940), "With Washington exerting constant pressure against higher prices for essential commodities, the steel companies will find themselves in a dilemma, if a demand for wage increases should come after prices have been announced for first quarter at a probable unchanged level."

"With this situation in mind, steel companies are inserting 'escalator' clauses more frequently in steel contracts as a protection against possible rising costs next year.

In other words, the steel magnates are demanding a sliding scale of prices. What howls would rend the heavens if the unions presented these same steel companies with contracts containing a sliding scale of wages. "Sabotage of National Defense! Unpatriotic! Etc.," one can almost hear them cry. Yet this is exactly what the unions must do. A sliding scale of wages is absolutely necessary to meet the rapidly rising cost of living. Let us learn from the example set by the bosses.

Fraternally,
Philadelphia Richard Swift

ADDS SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE CIO CONVENTION

Dear Editor:

I was down at the CIO convention for my union, and I want to say that LABOR ACTION did a swell job reporting the convention. It sure gave me a good feeling to walk into the convention hall and see almost all the delegates carrying LABOR ACTION in their pockets. Coolidge's report which appeared in the last issue, left little to be added. I would, however, like to list a few observations that came to my mind during the sessions. And if you have no objections I'll just jot them down in separate paragraphs:

It is really from this convention on that the CIO affiliates are considering themselves a separate federation of labor. Up to this time they had more or less considered themselves a temporary organizing committee which would "return to the fold" as soon as its job was done. An industrial union develops additional roots and branches as it grows and the growth of the CIO has complicated and made more difficult the question of unity. On the convention floor and in the lobbies, one could sense an anti-AFL feeling growing. The Atlantic City delegates

are close to the rank and file and it will not be too difficult to transmit this feeling to the workers in the CIO. Jurisdictional fights with the AFL will increase.

Walter Reuther of the United Automobile Workers is still hanging onto "collective security" and was bitter toward his colleagues of yesterday whose line has changed. "I say not one boy to go across the seas but let us send them (Britain-MS) all the planes and all the equipment we can". There must be a question in Reuther's mind about just what is being defended by Britain. In Spain we sent men to defend democracy against fascism. If Reuther feels Britain is defending democracy why not send men to help crush Hitler?

The Stalinists almost went insane when they saw a few of us talking with the Negro delegates. But this lasted only a day. After that the "protecting circle" was so thick we couldn't get near a Negro delegate.

The delegates cheered Van Bittner, Director of the organizing committee for Bethlehem Steel when he said, "There is just one force in America that will compel Bethlehem Steel to bargain collectively with the SWOC and that is the power and influence of the Steel Workers Union. Defense program or no defense program we are going to organize Bethlehem Steel. I have never known labor to get anything in this or any other country except that which they were able to take through the power and the influence of organized labor."

The "draft Lewis" movement was born out of panic. After the Roosevelt victory the CP wasn't sure what strength Hillman would have at the convention and they knew what would happen to them if Hillman controlled. They had planned to split the maritime unions they control from the CIO if Hillman got in. The Newspaper Guild Chapters in many sections of the country had stopped paying per-capita to state and city councils and were planning a referendum on going independent or uniting with an AFL group.

To see Art Shields of the Daily Worker and the Rev. Father Haas eating together brought back memories of the not-so-distant peoples' front period.

Fraternally,
M. Stevens

Vega Workers Call Xmas Gift For Churchill "A Lousy Trick"

LOS ANGELES, Calif., Nov. 26—Newspapers and radio broadcasts today spread a story nationally that the Vega aircraft workers had started a movement "to give Britain a bomber as a Christmas present."

The employees, according to the story, volunteered to give two hours of free labor to pay the cost of the Hudson bomber. It showed, don't you see, that the employees are "all out" for England, and hot for Roosevelt's policy.

There is just one thing wrong with this story, accepted as authentic by the newspapers and radios.

It is a pure fake.

The Vega workers did not volunteer to give two hours time for a free bomber to England.

Resentment High

Resentment against the proposal was so wide-spread that the foremen did not dare press for any of the workers to sign. A large majority of the workers refused to volunteer.

Reaction against this company trick to chisel two hours pay can be described as almost violent. The men within the plant cursed and swore, and tore up the form letter.

New York Party Convention Sets Press Expansion As Activity Goal

The New York organization of the Workers Party last week reviewed eight months of active work, since the founding of the Party last May, in a two-day convention held over the weekend of November 30 and December 1.

The record of fruitful and effective activity reported by the City Committee formed the background for the forward-looking planning of the twenty-three delegates assembled. An election campaign in the Bronx, of intensity and scope unprecedented in the Fourth Internationalist movement, continuous anti-war agitation based on the fight against the conscription bill, and propaganda for the anti-war program of the Party; important strides forward toward rooting a larger proportion of the Party membership in the trade unions and industrial shops; the recruitment of 46 new members since the last convention—these were some of the high points noted in the development of the Party into an active, agitational fighting organization during the recent months.

While the following was only one phase of the report, it is an index to the concentrated campaign work of the organization during the eight-month period: a total of over 400,000 pieces of propaganda literature was distributed in the course of the anti-war drive and election campaign—close to a half million. Another statistical indicator is the fact that fifteen city-wide mass meetings and demonstrations were held during the same period, including the demonstrations on May Day and before the Soviet Consulate—an average of one every two weeks.

The hard work and sacrifice which went to produce such results was obtained only through a sharp tightening-up in the ranks of the New York Party.

This part of the Convention's work was summed up as follows in the report:

The N.Y. party has just completed seven months of the most intensive activity in the history of our movement. The unique feature of this activity lies in the fact that it was not episodic, sporadic or periodic. It was seven months of uninterrupted action which involved progressively increasing numbers of the available party membership. It was performed in the summer period and on an historical background that was not favorable to us. It involved the biggest sustained campaign in the record of our movement. The primary, almost exclusive, character of our activity was street work. The principal direction of the party was towards efforts in lacing comrades in industry. If we did not achieve a full transformation in the habits of work, significant progress was made in this direction.

The above report indicates the tasks for the next period. Concentration on Labor Action, education, continued efforts toward industrial concentration; branch and neighborhood work. We must further tighten the ranks of the party; we must make continued efforts in the correction of methods of functioning. Thus the Party will steel itself for the war and its historic tasks in the war.

The Plan of Action, presenting the program of work for the next six months, emphasized the necessity of building up the sale and distribution of LABOR ACTION and the Party press, and of the further consolidation of the Party branches on a neighborhood basis. Internally, the task of expanding and intensifying the educational work of the organization, and the training of all members in the principles of Marxism, was highlighted. The main discussions on the floor took place on methods of effecting these aims, and the extension of the Party's strength in the industrial field.

On Reconstructing the British Social Order

The astute author of the Topic of the Times, daily editorial column in the New York Times, writing on Saturday Nov. 30, mocked those confused liberals who see a new social order of class equality being born under the impact of bomb and shell. Yes, says the Topicer, rich man and poor man may huddle in the same bomb-proof shelter (if, of course, the rich man can't get to one of the de luxe shelters in time—ed.), but after the war British waiters will go back to waiting, and coupon clippers back to clipping.

The Topicer knows the facts of life. All the propaganda so assiduously circulated by Dorothy Thompson and her like is just that . . . propaganda. The British bosses have exactly zero intention of yielding their class position to the masses. The imperialist war itself will do nothing more than perpetuate imperialist relationships.

There is, however, another factor that our smart Topicer doesn't consider. Before this war is over, the British workers (and the German workers, etc.) may do a little solid reconstructing of the social order—and that won't be of the vaporous kind Miss Thompson heralds.

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